Because of their small size, the particles tend to form loose agglomerates due to van der Waals and other electromagnetic forces between nearby particles. Nevertheless, the nanometer scale of the particles (i.e., primary particles) is clearly observable in transmission electron micrographs of the particles. For crystalline particles, the particle size generally corresponds to the crystal size. The particles generally have a surface area corresponding to particles on a nanometer scale as observed in the micrographs. Furthermore, the particles manifest unique properties due to their small size and large surface area per weight of material. For example, TiO_2 nanoparticles generally exhibit altered absorption properties based on their small size, as described in commonly assigned and simultaneously filed U.S. Patent Application serial number 08/962,515 now U.S. Patent 6,099,798, entitled "Ultraviolet Light Block and Photocatalytic Materials," incorporated herein by reference.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 5, 11 and 16-22. Please replace claims 1, 9 and 15 with the following:

1. (Amended) A polishing composition comprising a dispersion of particles, the particles comprising metal compounds and having an average particle diameter from about 5 nm to about 50 nm and a distribution of diameters such that at least about 95 percent of the particles have a diameter greater than about 60 percent of the average diameter and less than about 140 percent of the average diameter.

9. (Amended) The polishing composition of claim 1 having a single crystalline phase with a uniformity of at least about 90 percent by weight.

15. (Amended) A polishing composition comprising a dispersion of particles, the particles comprising metal compounds or silicon compounds with an average particle diameter from about 5 nm to